

Redwood High School

Department Chair Council

Minutes of the January 17, 2007 DCC Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m. Present: Peggy Bogason, Frances Bozdech, Heather Curtaz, Tara Donoghue, David Goldsmith, Steve Hettleman, Skip Lovelady, Nancy Neu, David Plescia, Gino Pomilia, Sue Shirley, LaSandra White. Parents: Carol Kuhn. Students: Sara DaMert, Beau Shaw. Guests: Paula Vantrease, Annie Zanobini. Peggy Bogason took minutes.

Minutes of the November 15, 2006 Meeting

The minutes of the November 15, 2006 DCC meeting stand as submitted.

Bank of America (Paula Vantrease)

Paula Vantrease explained the Bank of America awards' nomination process. She explained the two different categories, certificates and plaques. The deadline for nominees for the plaque awards is next Wednesday. She distributed the nomination forms to the appropriate DCC members.

California Healthy Kids Survey – TUHSD Board Report (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu distributed copies of the TUHSD Board report of the fall 2005 California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) as well as pages 92 – 98 of the survey. Mrs. Neu discussed the results of the survey but reminded the DCC that it is difficult to know how our students interpreted the questions on the survey; many of the questions are vague. Mrs. Neu explained that the Board has asked how the sites intend to disseminate this information, and what plans will be put in place to address the issues that surfaced in the survey. She said that the key portions of the survey's results will be discussed in DCC, distributed to the staff, and the Leadership class. Mrs. Neu reminded the DCC that we had created focus groups to address some of the most worrisome questions/responses after the last CHK survey two years ago. By using these focus groups, which included teachers and a broad cross section of students, we were able to clarify what the students thought the questions meant (many felt that the questions were too vague) and by rewording the questions we were able to get valuable and useful information from the students. Mrs. Neu said that we have many resources and programs in place to provide help and support for our students, including information kiosks in the counseling office, nurse's office, and library; the Safe Schools Ambassadors program; Link Crew has been built into a year-long program with lots of activities for the students; worked with the Leadership class and with staff about personalization and safety; Peer Resource is available to help students, as are the counselors from Bay Area Community Resources; campus assistants help with security and provide mediation opportunities; and we have worked hard to increase the perception of safety at school. She noted that there has been an increase in the number of students who feel very safe at school, from 17% in 2003 to 32% in 2005. She noted that the survey question asks, "How safe do you feel at school?" Mrs. Neu said it would be beneficial to know how many kids said "safe" as opposed to "very safe." She said that the total of students who answered "very safe," "safe," and "neither safe nor unsafe" is close to 90%. Mrs. Neu would like the DCC to discuss this information with their departments and to remind everyone to listen to what students are saying and pay attention to how they are behaving toward one another. She asked that the DCC bring their departments' feedback to the next meeting.

The DCC discussed ideas to address some of the issues that surfaced in the CHK survey:

- Possibly implement Challenge Day (a program that helps build community).
- Have students write about some of the CHKS issues during homeroom as a way to get more accurate and helpful feedback.
- Discuss ways to help students feel more protected from cyber-bullies on Facebook and Myspace websites.
- Have the Leadership class brainstorm ideas to take the CHKS information further.
- Discuss this information at the March PTSA meeting and remind the parents of the many resources available to help students.

AP/Honors Timeline (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu explained that it is time to start preparing the AP/Honors timeline. A memo with instructions and a copy of the matrix will be distributed to department chairs' mailboxes. She reminded the DCC to schedule informational meetings, entrance exams, etc., make sure that there aren't any time conflicts with other AP/Honors meetings, and put those dates on the master activities' calendar in Rm. 107. She also asked that the completed matrix be given to Peggy

Bogason, who will see that it is added to the Redwood High School website.

Next Year's Courses (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu said that the 2007-2008 master schedule will be built earlier than in previous years and to start thinking about next year's courses. Mrs. Neu will be building the schedule on the whiteboard, load it into PowerSchool, and then transfer it to E-Schools Plus. She asked the DCC to talk with their departments about what classes they would like to teach. Mrs. Neu will distribute preference sheets to all teachers. Mrs. Neu said that her plan is to have all students' scheduling requests entered into the computer as soon as possible after registration so that we will have a reasonable expectation of our numbers.

- Fran Bozdech discussed upcoming scheduling-related dates; she will e-mail staff with these dates. She reminded the DCC that students must return their registration sheets on time to have priority.
- A suggestion was made to move Open House to a date in early March next year so that students can see elective classrooms prior to scheduling.
- Mrs. Neu said that E-Schools Plus training starts next week. Later in the spring, teachers will attend training sessions.
- Mrs. Neu said that next year's new courses will include AP Environmental Science (replacing Environmental Science), and Topics in Modern Math. The District hopes to start the new Mandarin course – if a teacher is found – next year, possibly with two sections at Redwood: 0 period for middle school students, and 1st period for Redwood students.

Make-ups of Final Exams (Jennifer Labovich)

Because of Jennifer Labovich's absence, this agenda item will be discussed at the next DCC meeting.

February 7 DCC Meeting – Minimum Day (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu said the next DCC meeting falls on a minimum day. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the February 7 meeting will be canceled.

Additional Items

Nancy Neu discussed the I-Flirts fundraiser. She said that I-Flirts is fun only if plenty of students participate. Mrs. Neu said that the surveys cannot be filled out during class time, but perhaps the surveys could be distributed by seniors at the end of 2nd period. After some discussion, it was agreed to have seniors (TAs and Leadership students) wait outside of classrooms to distribute the surveys at the end of 2nd period. The Leadership class will send an e-mail to teachers explaining the process.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.